

For immediate release

Contact: Laura Young Mohr, 645-2123
May 5, 2011

City of Columbus Hosts Central Ohio Children's Water Festival

In recognition of the national Drinking Water Week, the Columbus Department of Public Utilities hosted 640 fifth-grade students and teachers for the fourth annual Central Ohio Children's Water

Festival today. The annual event, held at the Public Utilities Complex on Dublin Road, is designed to promote environmental awareness about our valuable water resources to elementary students through interactive displays and hands-on activities. Columbus Mayor Michael B. Coleman welcomed the students during the morning's Tapping Team demonstration.

"It's an honor to teach young people about the water treatment process, from the source to the tap," Mayor Coleman said. "The City of Columbus pumps an average of 140 million gallons of water to homes, schools and businesses each day, and we do it as energy efficiently as possible."

City Council President Andrew J. Ginther spoke to the students about the important part in history Columbus played in water treatment. In the 1870's, chemist Ellen Swallow Richards mentored several engineering students, some of whom later worked on pioneering water treatment methods and reservoir dams in Columbus. **"What an amazing group of early leaders we had. People used to die younger in those days, often due to illness from dirty water,"** Ginther noted. **"We have these people to thank for our longer life spans today by their contributions to the clean water we enjoy."**

City Council Member Eileen Y. Paley, chair of the Public Utilities Committee, was also on hand to greet students as they participated in festival activities, which were focused on ground water, surface water, drinking water and water quality.

Participating school districts included Columbus, Westerville, Worthington and Bexley.

Partnering agencies included:

- The Franklin and Delaware Soil and Water Conservation Districts
- Metro Parks
- Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission
- Ohio EPA
- Canoe Creation
- Engineering consultants: Brown and Caldwell, Burgess and Niple, Malcolm Pirnie and MWH

Residents interested in learning more about the drinking water treatment process and quality can view the current consumer confidence report at www.utilities.columbus.gov or request a copy by calling Customer Service at 645-8276.